

SHOBHIT NIRWAN's
DESIGNED



FEDERALISM

NEW NOTES FOR CLASS 10 2022 EXAMS

**Including NCERT Line-By-Line Questions
PYQs in MCQ Format
CBSE Sample Paper
Flowchart**

How is Federalism Practised

- Linguistic States
- Language Policy
- Centre-State Relation

Concept of Federalism

- Key features of federalism.
- Two types of federalism
 - Coming together federations
 - Holding together federations.
- Difference between Federal System and Unitary System.

India as a Federal Country

Federalism

Decentralisation in India

- Amendments of 1992
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Federalism is a system of government in which the power is divided between a central authority and various constituent units of the country.

Key features of Federalism:

- (i) There are two or more levels (or tiers) of government.
- (ii) Different levels of government govern the same citizens, but each level has its own jurisdiction in specific matters of legislation, taxation and administration.
- (iii) The jurisdictions of the respective levels of government are specified in the constitution. The authority and existence of each tier of government is constitutionally guaranteed.
- (iv) The fundamental provisions of constitution cannot be unilaterally changed by one level government. It requires the consent of both levels of govt.
- (v) Courts have the power to interpret the constitution and the power of different level of government. Supreme court makes judgement if any dispute arises between central and state govt. in the exercise of their respective powers.
- (vi) Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified to ensure their financial autonomy.
- (vii) Federal system has dual objective to safeguard and promote the unity, and to accommodate the regional diversity.

Two types of federations:

The exact balance of power between the central and the state Government varies from one federation to another.

COMING TOGETHER

- In this, many independent states come together to form a bigger unit.
- Usually all states have equal powers.
- State and central government are equally powerful.
- Eg:- USA, Switzerland, Australia

HOLDING TOGETHER

- In this, a large country decides to divide power between the constituent states and central government.
- Often the states have unequal powers.
- The central government tends to be more powerful.
- Eg India, Belgium, Spain

Difference between Federal System and Unitary System:

In federal, each levels of government enjoy their power independent of each other. In unitary system, either there is only one level of government or the sub-units are subordinate to the central government.

India as a Federal Country [cbse 2020]

- The constitution originally provided a two-tier system of government namely The Central Government and The State Government.

- A third tier of federalism was added later in the form of Panchayats and Municipalities. There are now three levels of government, Central, State and Local Government. Their existence and authority is constitutionally guaranteed.
- The jurisdiction of each level of government is specified in constitution. There are following lists -
 - Union List - It contains subjects of national importance and requires a uniform policy throughout the country. Central government alone can make laws related to these subjects. Eg - Defence, Banking, Currency, Foreign Affairs etc.
 - State List - It contains subjects of state and local importance and are of day to day administration. State government alone can make laws related to these subjects. Eg Police, Trade, Agriculture, Irrigation, Commerce etc.
 - Concurrent List - It includes subjects of common interest to both the Central and State Government like education, health, forest, marriage, adoption etc. Both government can make laws on these subjects, but if their laws conflict then the law made by Central Government will prevail.
 - Residuary List - It includes the subjects that came up after constitution was made like computer science. According to constitution the Central Government has powers to legislate on residuary subjects.
- India is a holding together federation. The constituent states do not have equal powers. Jammu and Kashmir was granted with special power. It used to have its own constitution, many provisions of Indian constitution didn't apply on J&K. (But After 2019, J&K no longer has this special status)
- Areas like Chandigarh, Lakshadweep and Delhi are called Union Territories. These territories do not have the powers of a state. The Central Government has special powers in running these areas.
- It is not easy to change the power sharing arrangement of India. First, it has to be passed by two third majority of both Houses of Parliament then it has to be passed by the legislatures of at least half of the total states.
- If any dispute arises between different levels of government about the exercise of power then Supreme Court or High Courts make a decision.

(3B) A government formed by the coming together of at least two parties is called coalition govt. ③

How is Federalism Practised? [cbse 2016]

Linguistic States:

- The creation of linguistic states was the first and a major test for democratic politics in our country.
- After Independence (1947), the boundaries of several old states were changed in order to create new states.
- This was done to ensure that the people who spoke the same language lived in the same state.

Language Policy:

- The Indian constitution does not give status of national language to any one language.
- About 40% of Indians mother tongue is Hindi. So, Hindi is the official language of India.
- Besides Hindi, other 21 languages are recognised as scheduled languages by constitution.
- A candidate in an examination for a central government position may opt to take examination in any of these languages.
- States have their own official language in which the government work takes place in the respective state.
- English acts as a medium of communication between central and state or inter-state government work.

Centre - State Relations:

- For a long time, the same political party ruled in centre and many of the states. This did not allow state governments to exercise their rights as autonomous federal units.
- If the party ruling in state and centre was different then Central Government often misused the constitution to dismiss State Government that was controlled by their rival party.
- All this changed significantly after 1990. The time saw the rise of regional political parties. This was the beginning of the era of coalition government at Centre. No single parties had to enter in an alliance to form government at the centre.
- This led to a new culture of power sharing and respect for the autonomy of State Government.
- This new trend made difficult for Central Government to dismiss State Government in arbitrary manner.

Decentralisation in India

DECENTRALISATION - When power is taken away from Central and State Governments and is given to local government, it is called decentralisation.

The local government includes Panchayats in Villages and Municipalities in Urban Areas.

Earlier elections were not held regularly and local governments were not given any power by State Government. A major step towards decentralisation was taken in 1992:-

Amendments of 1992 : (cbse 2018)

- It is constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies
- Seats are reserved in the elected bodies for SC, ST and OBC.
- At least one third of all positions are reserved for women.
- An independent institution is created called State Election Commission in each state to conduct panchayat and municipality elections.
- The state Government has to share some of its power and revenue with local government. This sharing varies from state to state.

Structure of Rural Local Government:

- Each village has a Gram Panchayat consisting of several ward members (Panch) and a President (Sarpanch). They are directly elected by the adult population of that ward or village. It works under the supervision of Gram Sabha.
- Few gram panchayat forms panchayat samiti or block or mandal. The members of this representative bodies are elected by all the Panchayat members in that area.
- All panchayat samitis or mandals of the district together form Zila Parishad. Members of Lok Sabha, MLAs of that district and some other officials of other district level bodies are also its members.
- In big cities, there are Municipal Corporations. Both these local government bodies are controlled by elected bodies consisting of people's representatives.

Federalism



Overview

In the previous chapter, we noted that vertical division of power among different levels of government is one of the major forms of power-sharing in modern democracies. In this chapter, we focus on this form of power-sharing. It is most commonly referred to as federalism. We begin by describing federalism in general terms. The rest of the chapter tries to understand the theory and practice of federalism in India. A discussion of the federal constitutional provisions is followed by an analysis of the policies and politics that has strengthened federalism in practice. Towards the end of the chapter, we turn to the local government, a new and third tier of Indian federalism.

Chapter 2

Q1. In which year Belgium shifted from a unitary to a federal form of government?

Q2. What type of government was in Sri Lanka?

What is federalism?



I am confused. What do we call the Indian government? Is it Union, Federal or Central?

Q what change took place in Belgium during 1993?

Let us get back to the contrast between Belgium and Sri Lanka that we saw in the last chapter. You would recall that one of the key changes made in the Constitution of Belgium was to reduce the power of the Central Government and to give these powers to the regional governments. Regional governments existed in Belgium even earlier. They had their roles and powers. But all these powers were given to these governments and could be withdrawn by the Central Government. The change that took place in 1993 was that the regional governments were given constitutional powers that were no longer dependent on the central government. Thus, Belgium shifted from a unitary to a federal form of government. Sri Lanka continues to be

for all practical purposes, a unitary system where the national government has all the powers. Tamil leaders want Sri Lanka to become a federal system.

Federalism is a system of government in which the power is divided between a central authority and various constituent units of the country. Usually, a federation has two levels of government. One is the government for the entire country that is usually responsible for a few subjects of common national interest. The others are governments at the level of provinces or states that look after much of the day-to-day administering of their state. Both these levels of governments enjoy their power independent of the other.



Source: Montreal and Kingston, *Handbook of Federal Countries: 2002*, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002.

Though only 25 of the world's 193 countries have federal political systems, their citizens make up 40 per cent of the world's population. Most of the large countries of the world are federations. Can you notice an exception to this rule in this map?

Q3. What are the two types of federalism?

Q4. The area over which someone has legal authority known as?

In this sense, federations are contrasted with unitary governments. Under the unitary system, either there is only one level of government or the sub-units are subordinate to the central government. The central government can pass on orders to the provincial or the local government. But in a federal system, the central government cannot order the state government to do something. State government has powers of its own for which it is not answerable to the central government. Both these governments are separately answerable to the people.

Let us look at some of the key features of federalism :

- 1 There are two or more levels (or tiers) of government.
- 2 Different tiers of government govern the same citizens, but each tier has its own **JURISDICTION** in specific matters of legislation, taxation and administration.
- 3 The jurisdictions of the respective levels or tiers of government are specified in the constitution. So the existence and authority of each tier of government is constitutionally guaranteed.
- 4 The fundamental provisions of the constitution cannot be unilaterally changed by one level of government. Such changes require the consent of both the levels of government.
- 5 Courts have the power to interpret the constitution and the powers of different levels of government. The highest court acts as an umpire if disputes arise between different levels of government in the exercise of their respective powers.
- 6 Sources of revenue for each level of government are clearly specified to ensure its financial autonomy.

7 The federal system thus has dual objectives: to safeguard and promote unity of the country, while at the same time accommodate regional diversity. Therefore, two aspects are crucial for the institutions and practice of federalism. Governments at different levels should agree to some rules of power-sharing. They should also trust that each would abide by its part of the agreement. An ideal federal system has both aspects : mutual trust and agreement to live together.

The exact balance of power between the central and the state government varies from one federation to another. This balance depends mainly on the historical context in which the federation was formed. There are two kinds of routes through which federations have been formed. The first route involves independent States coming together on their own to form a bigger unit, so that by pooling sovereignty and retaining identity they can increase their security. This type of **'coming together' federations** include the USA, Switzerland and Australia. In this first category of federations, all the constituent States usually have equal power and are strong vis-à-vis the federal government.

The second route is where a large country decides to divide its power between the constituent States and the national government. India, Spain and Belgium are examples of this kind of **'holding together' federations**. In this second category, the central government tends to be more powerful vis-à-vis the States. Very often different constituent units of the federation have unequal powers. Some units are granted special powers.



If federalism works only in big countries, why did Belgium adopt it?

Glossary

Jurisdiction: The area over which someone has legal authority. The area may be defined in terms of geographical boundaries or in terms of certain kinds of subjects.

Q5. What are the three tiers of federalism in India?

Q6. What are the three lists contained in the Constitution of India?



Some Nepalese citizens were discussing the proposals on the adoption of federalism in their new constitution. This is what some of them said:

Khag Raj: I don't like federalism. It would lead to reservation of seats for different caste groups as in India.

Sarita: Ours is not a very big country. We don't need federalism.

Babu Lal: I am hopeful that the Terai areas will get more autonomy if they get their own state government.

Ram Ganesh: I like federalism because it will mean that powers that were earlier enjoyed by the king will now be exercised by our elected representatives.

If you were participating in this conversation what would be your response to each of these? Which of these reflect a wrong understanding of what federalism is? What makes India a federal country?

Q What makes India a federal country?

We have earlier seen how small countries like Belgium and Sri Lanka face so many problems of managing diversity. What about a vast country like India, with so many languages, religions and regions? What are the power sharing arrangements in our country?

Let us begin with the Constitution. India had emerged as an independent nation after a painful and bloody partition. Soon after Independence, several princely states became a part of the country. The Constitution declared India as a Union of States. Although it did not use the word federation, the Indian Union is based on the principles of federalism.

Let us go back to the seven features of federalism mentioned above. We can see that all these features apply to the provisions of the Indian Constitution. The Constitution originally provided for a two-tier system of government, the Union Government or what we call the Central Government, representing

the Union of India and the State governments. Later, a third tier of federalism was added in the form of Panchayats and Municipalities. As in any federation, these different tiers enjoy separate jurisdiction. The Constitution clearly provided a three-fold distribution of legislative powers between the Union Government and the State Governments. Thus, it contains three lists:

- **Union List** includes subjects of national importance such as defence of the country, foreign affairs, banking, communications and currency. They are included in this list because we need a uniform policy on these matters throughout the country. The Union Government alone can make laws relating to the subjects mentioned in the Union List.

- **State List** contains subjects of State and local importance such as police, trade, commerce, agriculture and irrigation. The State Governments

Isn't that strange? Did our constitution makers not know about federalism? Or did they wish to avoid talking about it?



Q7. Give 4 examples of the states of India enjoying special powers under certain provisions of the Constitution of India (Article 371)?

Q8. Who runs the Union Territories of India?

Q9. Who plays an important role in overseeing the implementation of constitutional provisions and procedures?

Q10. In case of any dispute about the division of powers, who makes a decision?

forest, trade unions, marriage, adoption and succession. Both the Union as well as the State Governments can make laws on the subjects mentioned in this list. If their laws conflict with each other, the law made by the Union Government will prevail.

What about subjects that do not fall in any of the three lists? Or subjects like computer software that came up after the constitution was made? According to our constitution, the Union Government has the power to legislate on these 'residuary' subjects.

We noted above that most federations that are formed by 'holding together' do not give equal power to its constituent units. Thus, all States in the Indian Union do not have identical powers. Some States enjoy a special status. States such as Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram enjoy special powers under certain provisions of the Constitution of India (Article 371) due to their peculiar social and historical circumstances. These special powers are especially enjoyed in relation to the protection of land rights of indigenous peoples, their culture and also preferential employment in government services. Indians who are not permanent residents of this State cannot buy land or house here. Similar special

provisions exist for some other States of India as well.

There are some units of the Indian Union which enjoy very little power. These are areas which are too small to become an independent State but which could not be merged with any of the existing States. These areas, like Chandigarh, or Lakshadweep or the capital city of Delhi, are called Union Territories. These territories do not have the powers of a State. The Central Government has special powers in running these areas.

This sharing of power between the Union Government and the State governments is basic to the structure of the Constitution. It is not easy to make changes to this power sharing arrangement. The Parliament cannot on its own change this arrangement. Any change to it has to be first passed by both the Houses of Parliament with at least two-thirds majority. Then it has to be ratified by the legislatures of at least half of the total States.

The judiciary plays an important role in overseeing the implementation of constitutional provisions and procedures. In case of any dispute about the division of powers, the High Courts and the Supreme Court make a decision. The Union and State governments have the power to raise resources by levying taxes in order to carry on the government and the responsibilities assigned to each of them.



If agriculture and commerce are state subjects, why do we have ministers of agriculture and commerce in the Union cabinet?



Listen to one national and one regional news bulletin broadcast by All India Radio daily for one week. Make a list of news items related to government policies or decisions by classifying these into the following categories:

- News items that relate only to the Central Government,
- News items that relate only to your or any other State Government,
- News items about the relationship between the Central and State Governments.



- Pokharan, the place where India conducted its nuclear tests, lies in Rajasthan. Suppose the Government of Rajasthan was opposed to the Central Government's nuclear policy, could it prevent the Government of India from conducting the nuclear tests?
- Suppose the Government of Sikkim plans to introduce new textbooks in its schools. But the Union Government does not like the style and content of the new textbooks. In that case, does the state government need to take permission from the Union Government before these textbooks can be launched?
- Suppose the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Orissa have different policies on how their state police should respond to the naxalites. Can the Prime Minister of India intervene and pass an order that all the Chief Ministers will have to obey?

Q11. Which States were created not on the basis of language but to recognise differences based on culture, ethnicity or geography in 1947?

How is federalism practised?

Constitutional provisions are necessary for the success of federalism but these are not sufficient. If the federal experiment has succeeded in India, it is not merely because of the clearly laid out constitutional provisions. The real success of federalism in India can be attributed to the nature of democratic politics in our country. This ensured that the spirit of federalism, respect for diversity and desire for living together became shared ideals in our country. Let us look at some of the major ways in which this happened.

Linguistic States

The creation of linguistic States was the first and a major test for democratic politics in our country. If you look at

the political map of India when it began its journey as a democracy in 1947 and that of 2019, you will be surprised by the extent of the changes. Many old States have vanished and many new States have been created. Areas, boundaries and names of the States have been changed.

In 1947, the boundaries of several old States of India were changed in order to create new States. This was done to ensure that people who spoke the same language lived in the same State. Some States were created not on the basis of language but to recognise differences based on culture, ethnicity or geography. These include States like Nagaland, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand.



- Has your village / town / city remained under the same State since Independence? If not, what was the name of the earlier State?
- Can you identify names of three States in 1947 that have been changed later?
- Identify any three States which have been carved out of bigger States.

Q12. Besides Hindi, there are how many other languages recognised as Scheduled Languages by the Constitution

Q13. A government formed by the coming together of at least two political parties known as?

When the demand for the formation of States on the basis of language was raised, some national leaders feared that it would lead to the disintegration of the country. The Central Government resisted linguistic States for some time. But the experience has shown that the formation of linguistic States has actually made the country more united. It has also made administration easier.



Why Hindi?
Why not
Bangla or
Telugu?

Language policy

A second test for Indian federation is the language policy. Our Constitution did not give the status of national language to any one language. Hindi was identified as the official language. But Hindi is the mother tongue of only about 40 per cent of Indians. Therefore, there were many safeguards to protect other languages. Besides Hindi, there are 21 other languages recognised as Scheduled Languages by the Constitution. A candidate in an examination conducted for the Central Government positions may opt to take the examination in any of these languages. States too have their own official languages. Much of the government work takes place in the official language of the concerned State.

Unlike Sri Lanka, the leaders of our country adopted a very cautious attitude in spreading the use of Hindi. According to the Constitution, the use of English for official purposes was to stop in 1965. However, many non-Hindi speaking States demanded that the use of English continue. In Tamil Nadu, this movement took a violent form. The Central Government responded by agreeing to continue the use of English along with Hindi for official purposes. Many critics think that this solution favoured the English-speaking elite. Promotion of Hindi

continues to be the official policy of the Government of India. Promotion does not mean that the Central Government can impose Hindi on States where people speak a different language. The flexibility shown by Indian political leaders helped our country avoid the kind of situation that Sri Lanka finds itself in.

Centre-State relations

Restructuring the Centre-State relations is one more way in which federalism has been strengthened in practice. How the constitutional arrangements for sharing power work in reality depends to a large extent on how the ruling parties and leaders follow these arrangements. For a long time, the same party ruled both at the Centre and in most of the States. This meant that the State governments did not exercise their rights as autonomous federal units. As and when the ruling party at the State level was different, the parties that ruled at the Centre tried to undermine the power of the States. In those days, the Central Government would often misuse the Constitution to dismiss the State governments that were controlled by rival parties. This undermined the spirit of federalism.

All this changed significantly after 1990. This period saw the rise of regional political parties in many States of the country. This was also the beginning of the era of COALITION GOVERNMENTS at the Centre. Since no single party got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, the major national parties had to enter into an alliance with many parties including several regional parties to form a government at the Centre. This led to a new culture of power sharing and respect for the autonomy of State Governments. This trend was



Coalition government:
A government formed by the coming together of at least two political parties. Usually partners in a coalition form a political alliance and adopt a common programme.

The States Plead for More Powers

Perils of Running a Coalition Government

© Kutty - Laughing with Kutty

© Ajith Ninan - India Today Book of Cartoons

Here are two cartoons showing the relationship between Centre and States. Should the State go to the Centre with a begging bowl? How can the leader of a coalition keep the partners of government satisfied?

supported by a major judgement of the Supreme Court that made it difficult for the Central Government to dismiss state governments in an arbitrary manner. Thus, federal power sharing is more effective today than it was in the early years after the Constitution came into force.



Are you suggesting that regionalism is good for our democracy? Are you serious?

Q14. 22 Languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution are known as?

Q15. Hindi is the mother tongue of how many percent of Indians?

+ Linguistic diversity of India

How many languages do we have in India? The answer depends on how one counts it. The latest information that we have is from the Census of India held in 2011. This census recorded more than 1300 distinct languages which people mentioned as their mother tongues. These languages were grouped together under some major languages. For example languages like Bhojpuri, Magadhi, Bundelkhandi, Chhattisgarhi, Rajasthani and many others were grouped together under 'Hindi'. Even after this grouping, the Census found 121 major languages. Of these 22 languages are now included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution and are therefore called 'Scheduled Languages'. Others are called 'non-Scheduled Languages'. In terms of languages, India is perhaps the most diverse country in the world.

A look at the enclosed table makes it clear that no one language is the mother tongue of the majority of our population. The largest language, Hindi, is the mother tongue of only about 44 per cent Indians. If we add to that all those who knew Hindi as their second or third language, the total number was still less than 50 per cent in 2011. As for English, only 0.02 per cent Indians recorded it as their mother tongue. Another 11 per cent knew it as a second or third language.

Read this table carefully, but you need not memorise it. Just do the following:

- Make a bar or pie chart on the basis of this information.
- Prepare a map of linguistic diversity of India by shading the region where each of these languages is spoken on the map of India.
- Find out about any three languages that are spoken in India but are not included in this table.

Scheduled Languages of India

Language	Proportion of speakers (%)
Assamese	1.26
Bengali	8.03
Bodo	0.12
Dogri	0.21
Gujarati	4.58
Hindi	43.63
Kannada	3.61
Kashmiri	0.56
Konkani	0.19
Maithili	1.12
Malayalam	2.88
Manipuri	0.15
Marathi	6.86
Nepali	0.24
Odia	3.10
Punjabi	2.74
Sanskrit	N
Santali	0.61
Sindhi	0.23
Tamil	5.70
Telugu	6.70
Urdu	4.19

N — Stands for negligible.

Source: <http://www.censusindia.gov.in>



Read the following excerpts from an article by noted historian, Ramachandra Guha, that appeared in the *Times of India* on November 1, 2006:

MAGIC
The magic of the States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) was implemented exactly 50 years ago, on November 1, 1956. This, in its own time and own way, has also transformed the political and institutional life of the nation. ... Gandhi and other leaders promised their followers that when freedom came, the new nation would be based on a new set of provinces, these based on the principle of language. However, when India was finally freed in 1947, it was also divided...

be revived
First: Mitharraf Mijet Glop

Partition was the consequence of a primordial attachment to one's faith; how many more partitions would that other primordial loyalty, language, lead to? So ran the thinking of Nehru, Patel and Rajaji.

Far from undermining Indian unity, linguistic states have helped strengthen it. It has proved to be perfectly consistent to be Kannadiga and Indian, Bengali and Indian, Tamil and Indian, Gujarati and Indian. To be sure, these states based on language sometimes quarrel with one another.

While these disputes are not pretty, they could in fact have been far worse.

It is the formation of linguistic states that has allowed India to escape what might have been a worse fate still. If the sentiments of the native speakers of Telugu, Marathi, et. al. had been disregarded, what we might have here was: 'One language: 14 or 15 nations'."

Take the example of your own state or any other state that was affected by linguistic reorganisation. Write a short note for or against the argument given by the author here on the basis of that example.

Q16. In terms of population, Uttar Pradesh is bigger than which country?

Q17. In terms of population, Maharashtra is bigger than which country?

Q18. When power is taken away from Central and State governments and given to local government, it is known as?

Q19. A major step towards decentralisation was taken in which year?

Q20. Rural local government popularly known by the name?

Decentralisation in India



So, we are like a three-tier coach in a train! I always prefer the lower berth!

We noted above that federal governments have two or more tiers of governments. We have so far discussed the two-tiers of government in our country. But a vast country like India cannot be run only through these two-tiers. States in India are as large as independent countries of Europe. In terms of population, Uttar Pradesh is bigger than Russia, Maharashtra is about as big as Germany. Many of these States are internally very diverse. There is thus a need for power sharing within these States. Federal power sharing in India needs another tier of government, below that of the State governments. This is the rationale for decentralisation of power. Thus, resulted a third-tier of government, called local government.

When power is taken away from Central and State governments and given to local government, it is called decentralisation. The basic idea behind decentralisation is that there are a large number of problems and issues which are best settled at the local level. People have better knowledge of problems in their localities. They also have better ideas on where to spend money and how to manage things more efficiently. Besides, at the local level it is possible for the people to directly participate in decision making. This helps to inculcate a habit of democratic participation. Local government is the best way to realise one important principle of democracy, namely local self-government.

The need for decentralisation was recognised in our Constitution. Since then, there have been several attempts to decentralise power to the level of villages and towns. Panchayats in

villages and municipalities in urban areas were set up in all the States. But these were directly under the control of state governments. Elections to these local governments were not held regularly. Local governments did not have any powers or resources of their own. Thus, there was very little decentralisation in effective terms.

A major step towards decentralisation was taken in 1992. The Constitution was amended to make the third-tier of democracy more powerful and effective.

- Now it is constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies.
- Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.
- At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women.
- An independent institution called the State Election Commission has been created in each State to conduct panchayat and municipal elections.
- The State governments are required to share some powers and revenue with local government bodies. The nature of sharing varies from State to State.

Rural local government is popularly known by the name panchayati raj. Each village, or a group of villages in some States, has a gram panchayat. This is a council consisting of several ward members, often called panch, and a president or sarpanch. They are directly elected by all the adult population living in that ward

Q21. A few gram panchayats are grouped together to form what is usually called?

Q22. All the panchayat samitis or mandals in a district together constitute?

Q23. Who is the political head of the zilla parishad?

or village. It is the decision-making body for the entire village. The panchayat works under the overall supervision of the gram sabha. All the voters in the village are its members. It has to meet at least twice or thrice in a year to approve the annual budget of the gram panchayat and to review the performance of the gram panchayat.

The local government structure goes right up to the district level. A few gram panchayats are grouped together to form what is usually called a panchayat samiti or block or mandal. The members of this representative body are elected by all the panchayat members in that area. All the panchayat samitis or mandals in a district together

constitute the zilla (district) parishad.

Most members of the zilla parishad are elected. Members of the Lok Sabha and MLAs of that district and some other officials of other district level bodies are also its members. Zilla parishad chairperson is the political head of the zilla parishad.

Similarly, local government bodies exist for urban areas as well. Municipalities are set up in towns. Big cities are constituted into municipal corporations. Both municipalities and municipal corporations are controlled by elected bodies consisting of people's representatives. Municipal chairperson is the political head of the municipality. In a municipal corporation such an officer is called the mayor.



Prime Minister runs the country. Chief Minister runs the state. Logically, then, the chairperson of Zilla Parishad should run the district. Why does the D.M. or Collector administer the district?



What do these newspaper clippings have to say about efforts of decentralisation in India?

Q24. Which city in Brazil had carried out an extraordinary experiment in combining decentralisation with participative democracy?

Q25. In which Indian state ordinary people had participated in making a plan for the development of their locality?

An experiment in Brazil

A city called Porto Alegre in Brazil has carried out an extraordinary experiment in combining decentralisation with participative democracy. The city has set up a parallel organisation operating alongside the municipal council, enabling local inhabitants to take real decisions for their city. The nearly 13 lakh people in this city get to participate in making the budget for their own city. The city is divided into many sectors or what we call wards. Each sector has a meeting, like that of the gram sabha, in which anyone living in that area can participate. There are some meetings to discuss issues that affect the entire city. Any citizen of the city can participate in those meetings. The budget of the city is discussed in these meetings. The proposals are put to the municipality that takes a final decision about it.

About 20,000 people participate in this decision making exercise every year. This method has ensured that the money cannot be spent only for the benefit of the colonies where rich people live. Buses now run to the poor colonies and builders cannot evict slum-dwellers without resettling them.

In our own country, a similar experiment has taken place in some areas in Kerala. Ordinary people have participated in making a plan for the development of their locality.

This new system of local government is the largest experiment in democracy conducted anywhere in the world. There are now about 36 lakh elected representatives in the panchayats and municipalities etc., all over the country. This number is bigger than the population of many countries in the world. Constitutional status for local government has helped to deepen democracy in our country. It has also

increased women's representation and voice in our democracy. At the same time, there are many difficulties. While elections are held regularly and enthusiastically, gram sabhas are not held regularly. Most state governments have not transferred significant powers to the local governments. Nor have they given adequate resources. We are thus still a long way from realising the ideal of self-government.



Find out about the local government in the village or town you live in.

If you live in a village, find out the names of the following: your panch or ward member, your sarpanch, your panchayat samiti, the chairperson of your zilla parishad. Also find out when did the last meeting of the gram sabha take place and how many people took part in that.

If you live in urban areas, find out the name of your municipal councillor, and the municipal chairperson or mayor. Also find out about the budget of your municipal corporation, municipality and the major items on which money was spent.

ANSWERS(FEDERALISM)

Ans.1 1993

Ans2. Unitary System

Ans3. 'coming together' federations, 'holding together' federations

Ans4. Jurisdiction

Ans5. Central Government, State Government, Panchayat and Municipalities.

Ans6. 1) Union List, 2) State List and 3) Concurrent List.

Ans7. Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram

Ans8. Central Government

Ans9. Judiciary

Ans10. The High Courts and the Supreme Court

Ans11. Nagaland, Uttarakhand and Jharkhand

Ans12. 21

Ans13. Coalition

Ans14. Scheduled Languages

Ans15. only about 44 percent

Ans16. Russia

Ans17. Germany

Ans18. Decentralisation

Ans19. 1992

Ans20. Panchayati Raj

Ans21. Panchayat Samiti or block or mandal

Ans22. Zilla (district) Parishad

Ans23. Zilla parishad chairperson

Ans24. Porto Alegre

Ans25. Kerala

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

SPECIALLY CONVERTED IN MCQ FORMAT

1. Which administrative authority legislates on Residuary subjects?

[2021]

- a) State
- b) union
- c) Concurrent
- d) All of the above

Ans: B

2. Which administrative authority legislates on the Union list?

[2021]

- a) Union Government
- b) Legislative
- c) Executive
- d) Judicial

Ans: A

3. Name the subject list from which both the Union and the State governments can make laws?

[2017]

- a) Union List
- b) Concurrent List
- c) State List
- d) All the above

Answer: B

4. What other factors besides politics keep the federations united ?

[2015]

- a) Language Ethnicity
- b) Power Sharing
- c) Resource Distribution
- d) All The Above

Ans: D

5. Which local body has a 'Mayor' as its head? [2015]

- a) Nagar Panchayat
- b) Municipal Council
- c) Municipal Corporation
- d) None of the above

Ans: C

6. Much of the official work in Indian States is done in which language? [2014]

- a) English
- b) Hindi
- c) Any language.
- d) Concerned state

Ans: D

7. What is Rural local self government popularly known as? [2013]

- a) Panchayati Raj
- b) Municipal Corporation
- c) Municipal Council
- d) Ward Councils

Ans: A

8. What status has been given to the 'Hindi' language by the Constitution of India? [2013]

- a) National Language
- b) Inter state Language
- c) Official Language
- d) State Language

Ans: C

9. Describe any three steps taken by the government towards decentralization in the year 1992 [2021]

- a) The Constitution mandates the hold regular elections to local

government bodies.

b) Reservation of seats in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Classes.

c) Reservation of at least one third of all positions for women.

d) All of the above

Ans: D

11. Name any two subjects that are included in the Concurrent List.

[2019]

a) Police

b) Trade and commerce

c) Education

d) Banking

Ans: C

12. How is the sharing of power between the Union and the State Governments basic to the structure of the Constitution of India?

Explain.

[2019]

Answer- 1. Sharing of power between the Union and the State governments is very basic to the structure of the Constitution. The Constitution has distributed the legislative powers between the state government and Union government by dividing the subjects in Union list and State list, on which, these governments can make laws respectively. There is a Concurrent list as well on which, both the governments can make laws.

2. Also, State governments enjoy their own power in the states like Jammu and Kashmir. Many provisions of the Indian Constitution are not applicable in the states without the approval of the state government. On the other hand, the Union government enjoys its own hold over some of the union territories. This distribution of power is well embedded in the provisions of the constitution and is thus its basic structure.

13. Describe any three provisions of amendment made in 'Indian

Constitution' in 1992 for making 'Three-Tier' government more effective and powerful. [2018]

Answer- A major step towards decentralization was taken in 1992. The constitution was amended to make the third tier of democracy more powerful and effective:

1. Now it is constitutionally mandated to hold regular elections for local government bodies
2. Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for SC/ST/Backward classes. At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women.
3. An independent institution called the State Election Commission has been created in each state to conduct Panchayat and Municipal elections.

14. India comes under which type of federation and why? [2014]

Answer-

1. India comes under 'a holding together' type federation. In this type of federation, a large country divides its power between the constituent States and the National government. There is one government for the entire country and the others are governments at the State level. Both Central and State Governments enjoy their power independent of the other.
2. The Central government tends to be more powerful vis-a-vis the states. Often different constituent units of the federation have unequal powers. For example, special powers have been granted to Jammu & Kashmir till 2019.

15. Why is decentralisation favoured in democracy? Identify any two reasons. [2014]

Answer- Two advantages of decentralisation of power:

1. When power is taken away from Central and State Governments and given to local governments, it is called decentralisation. The basic idea behind decentralisation is that there are a large number of problems and issues which are best settled at the local level. People have better knowledge of problems in their localities.
2. They also have better ideas on where to spend money and how to manage things more efficiently.

16. Explain the vertical division of power by giving examples from India. [2013]

Answer- When power is shared among governments at different levels, i.e., the Union or the Central Government, the State Government and the Municipality and Panchayat at the lower level. This division of power involving higher and lower levels of government is called the vertical division of power.

Vertical division of power in India:

The Constitution declares India as a Union of States. Although the word 'Federation' is not used, the Indian Union is based on the principles of federation. The Constitution originally provided for a two-tier system of government, the Union Government or the Central Government representing the Union of India and the State Governments.

A third-tier of federation was added in the form of Panchayats and Municipalities. As in any federation, these different tiers enjoy separate jurisdiction. The Constitution provides for a] three-fold distribution of legislative powers between the Union Government and State Government. It contains three lists:

- 1 . Union List (97 Subjects)
2. State List (66 Subjects)
- dhle.in
3. Concurrent List (47 Subjects)

17. How is federal power sharing more effective today than in the early years? Explain. [2017]

Answer - 1 . Federal power sharing is more effective because of the nature of democratic politics in India. It has ensured that the spirit of federalism, respect for diversity and desire for living together have become a shared ideal in our country.

2. Federal power sharing has helped to inculcate a habit of democratic participation. Federal power sharing is the best way to realise one important principle of democracy, namely local self-government. Constitutional status for local government has helped to deepen democracy.

- A. It has increased women's representation and voice in democracy.
- B. Federal power sharing has led to formation of linguistic states which has

actually made the country more united. It has also made administration easier.

- C. It reduces the power of the Central government and gives power to regional governments.

18. Explain any five features of federalism.

[2015]

Answer - Features of federalism:

1. There are two or more levels of government.
2. Different levels of government govern the same citizens, where each level has its own jurisdiction in specific matters of legislation, taxation and administration.
3. Existence and authority of each level of government is constitutionally governed.
4. The fundamental provisions of the Constitution cannot be unilaterally changed. Such changes require the consent of both the levels of government.
5. Courts have the power to interpret the Constitution and powers of the different levels of government. The highest court acts as the umpire if any dispute arises between different levels of governments.

19. Which five provisions of the constitutional amendment of 1992 really strengthened the third tier of democracy in India? Explain.

[5M, 2015, 2013, 2012]

Answer - A20. Major steps towards decentralisation and strengthening of third tier taken in 1992 were:

1. Now it is constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to Local Government bodies.
2. Seats are reserved in elected bodies for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes (OBCs).
3. At least one-third of all positions and seats are reserved for women.
4. An independent institution called the State Election Commission was created to conduct Panchayat and Municipal elections.
5. The State Governments are required to share some powers and revenue with Local Government bodies.

22. Why has federalism succeeded in India? Which are the policies adopted by India that have ensured it? Explain. [2013, 2012]

Answer- Reasons for success of federalism in India are:

1. Clearly laid out Constitutional Provisions providing a three-fold distribution of powers in the three lists-Union List, State List and Concurrent List-between the Union Government and State Governments.
2. The nature of democratic politics in our country ensures that the spirit of federalism, respect for diversity and desire for living together becomes a shared ideal.
3. The creation of linguistic states. Boundaries of several old states of India were changed in order to create new states. This was done to ensure that people who spoke the same language lived in the same state. Later some states were created to recognise differences based on culture, ethnicity or geography. For example: Nagaland, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Telangana, etc.
4. Restricting Centre-State relations. The constitutional arrangements for sharing power work depending on how the ruling parties and leaders follow these arrangements. For a long time, the same party ruled both at the Centre and in most states. Post-1990 saw the rise of regional parties. Since no single party got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha, the national parties had to enter into an alliance which led to a new culture of power sharing and respect for autonomy of State Governments.

ANSWERS:

1. B
2. A
3. B
4. D
5. C
6. D
7. A
8. C
9. D
10. C